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In the introductory segment of her captivity narrative, before the story becomes structured into a series of "removes," Mary Rowlandson succinctly states her purpose: "that I may the better declare what happened to me during that grievous Captivity" (121). Throughout the succeeding twenty removes, this middle-aged Puritan woman—the wife of a minister and the daughter of the wealthiest original landowner in Lancaster, Massachusetts—records her experience during the eleven weeks and five days she spent as a captive among the New England Indians. Her narrative begins with the extraordinarily violent Indian attack on her home, a scene she describes with emotion and in detail. At the end of the narrative, after she is ransomed from her captors, Rowlandson looks forward to the reunion of her family and the reintegration of that family into the Puritan community. But here Rowlandson's tone becomes one of reflective calm and her language one of generalized conclusion. The detailed explication, even the narrative interest, that informs her introduction is absent from the potentially moving scene of domestic and cultural restoration.

This stylistic dichotomy which frames Rowlandson's narrative is even more apparent within, where it becomes clear that her story is neither about her capture nor her eventual release, but about the journey between. That journey is, on the one hand, a type of spiritual pilgrimage which this good Puritan unwittingly but dutifully undergoes, an experience of affliction and conversion designed to tempt the captive and to test her sanctity and election. On the other hand, the captive is forced to travel for miles through the New England wilderness, to adapt not only to the landscape and to the Indians' often hurried march through it, but also to the social and ideological differences of the Algonquian culture. This physical journey also represents a test, but Rowlandson is only marginally aware, if at all, of

its cause or meaning. Prior to her captivity, the Indian culture did not exist for Mary Rowlandson and her readers other than in the form of a typological symbol. By transforming the experience of her captivity into a written narrative in order "the better to declare what happened" to her, Rowlandson documents the extraordinary interaction between two cultures that had long inhabited the same country but had experienced little contact, especially on such an intimate level and over such an extended period of time.

The curious split in the narrative tone of Rowlandson's narrative makes it seem as though the detailed observations of her physical journey were recorded by one voice, and the scriptural quotations and conclusions drawn from her experience recorded by another. As Kathryn Zabelle Derounian accurately describes it, the "empirical narration (the 'colloquial' style) defines the author's role as participant, while rhetorical narration (the 'biblical' style) defines her role as interpreter and commentator" ("Puritan" 82). What makes this dichotomy so striking, is that the participatory experiences described in such detail by the author contradict the interpretive conclusions drawn from them. Yet these contradictions, which are so obvious to a modern reader of the *Narrative*, do not appear to have existed for its author nor for its earliest readers. There is nothing in Rowlandson's prose which indicates an awareness of the structural dissonance between her orthodox Puritan belief that the Indians are savage and cruel heathens, and her portrayal of individual Indians who are sympathetic and human. Explanations for Rowlandson's two "voices" typically locate the source of that duality in a contradiction between the individual psychology of the captive and the demands of Puritan society. It is certainly true that Rowlandson experiences psychological trauma and grief during her captivity; however, those experiences alienate neither her nor her narrative from Puritan cultural norms. Her ideology and theology remain remarkably consistent with traditional New England Puritanism.[1] This text's contradictions result less from Rowlandson's psy.' ological trauma, I suggest, than from her altered cultural subjectivity, an alteration produced by the extent and duration of contact with her Algonquian captors. The captive's liminal subject position generates the dialogism which makes this narrative so unusual, and which ultimately makes it an important source for the development of the novel both in America and England.

Richard Slotkin and James K. Folsom describe Rowlandson's narrative "as an account of the Indians that couples genuine human sympathy with a hatred almost unimaginable to one who has not gone through her experience" (304), thus positing a psychological basis for its stylistic paradox. Slotkin and Folsom later attribute that paradox to the captive's growing

cultural awareness and regard for the Indians. They see a progression in Rowlandson's style in which her

> rhetorical treatment of the Indians as devilish instruments of Satan becomes more and more conventional and pro forma. Although she never admits as much, her awareness that her captors, whatever their ultimate purpose in the providential scheme of things may be, are not personally especially malevolent, becomes increasingly evident. (307)

While this awareness certainly becomes evident to a twentieth-century reader, there is no compelling evidence to suggest that it was evident to Mary Rowlandson. This view invests the Puritan captive with an understanding which would have contradicted her theology, questioned the Puritan aim in the war, and subverted much of her own message. Rowlandson's sense of personal safety was not a result of Indian benevolence, but rather of God's benevolence. Slotkin and Folsom award the captive a sympathy for her captors which her own text never reveals. Her narrative, in its attention to detail and its often plainly observant style, does record acts of generosity performed by her captors, but it never expresses sympathy for those captors. To Rowlandson, a gift of a Bible, offers of food and shelter, and occasionally permitted visits to her children were providential acts attributable to God, not generous acts attributable to the Indians. While sitting in an Indian wigwam littered with the bloody clothes of a Puritan soldier she remarks that "the Lord suffered not this wretch to do me any hurt; Yea, instead of that, he many times refresht me: five or six times did he and his Squaw refresh my feeble carcass" (154). The Indian, despite his hospitality, remains a "wretch"; it is the Lord who "suffered" him to perform these providential acts of generosity.

Near the end of her narrative, when her orthodox treatment of the Indians—according to Slotkin and Folsom—should reveal less conviction than convention, the released captive gives thanks for "the wonderful power of God that I have seen, and the experience that I have had: I have been in the midst of those roaring Lyons, and Salvage Bears, that feared neither God, nor Man, nor the Devil" (161). When the Indians did display charity, it was a charity expressive of God's favor toward his Puritan pilgrim, not a charity like that of other Puritans such as Thomas Shepard, who helps the redeemed but homeless Rowlandson family. Mary Rowlandson never indicates that "she found that the Indians are truly her kindred in spirit: they are as much capable of charity as her own people, and she as capable of evil as they" (112), as Richard Slotkin claims in an earlier discussion of her narrative, although all the evidence a modern reader needs to reach such a conclusion is certainly evident in the text.

Kathryn Zabelle Derounian's analysis of Rowlandson's narrative duality is, too, founded on a reading of the text as a psychological document. Claiming that the contrasting participant and interpreter voices are further informed by "a clash of codes between Rowlandson's psychological and religious interpretations of her experience" ("Puritan" 83), Derounian argues that this narrative's dichotomy reveals the effects of "survivor syndrome"—a psychological trauma similar to that suffered by concentration camp prisoners. Rowlandson's effort to repress her psychological trauma in order to conform her experience to the standard theology of affliction, claims Derounian, results in the stylistic tension unique to this captivity narrative. While evidence of the captive's stress certainly exists, almost all of that evidence occurs in the early part of the narrative, before she begins to adapt to Indian habits, food and custom. It is quite possible that Rowlandson's later wigwam reverie which results in her confused act of "leap[ing] up and run[ning] out, as if I had been at home, forgetting where I was, and what my condition was" (141) is a "psychological denial of her experience as she actually underwent it" ("Puritan" 87). It may also be, however, a sign of growing ease in an environment where, though separated from family and European comforts, she has become relatively acculturated and has moreover gained an economic independence she never experienced in her own culture. At one point in her captivity, after selling several handsewn garments for a generous payment in bear meat and peas, Rowlandson actually invites her captors to dinner. Few sufferers of "survivor syndrome" were given an economic opportunity equal to that of their captors, and probably none ever invited those captors to dinner.

Rowlandson's first and only emotional breakdown during her captivity—after crossing a river into an enormous crowd of Indian warriors recently victorious in battle against the New Englanders—might also be less a release of emotional repression than a reaction to the growing possibility that her present affliction is less providential than she originally imagined. Her outburst is preceded by the observation that the "numerous crew of Pagans. . . . asked one another questions, and laughed, and rejoyced over their Gains and Victories. Then my heart began to fail" (134). It is during the next remove that she expresses a desire, for the first time, to be ransomed—as though prior to this experience her deliverance, though unspoken, was more assured. And it is perhaps at this moment that for Mary Rowlandson the Indians begin to take on a cultural substance never allowed for in the Puritan perception of them as a symbolic representation of the devil.

In his book-length study of Rowlandson's narrative, Mitchell Robert Breitwieser supports both Slotkin and Folsom's (89) and Derounian's analyses (128), while significantly extending these psychological ap-

proaches by considering the text's philosophical associations as well as its cultural context. In a brilliant analysis of the phenomenology of grief within the exemplaristic Puritan society, Breitwieser argues that it is Rowlandson's suppression of mourning for her daughter Sarah, who died in her arms during captivity, that produces her errant psychology. That errancy resists (or rather, exceeds) not only the available typological interpretation of her experience, but resists as well grief's traditional place in Puritan theology, causing Rowlandson to become "disaffected with the value system" (148) of her society. It is her mourning that "leads her toward recognizing Indian society *as a society*, rather than as lawless animality" (148–49), for the Indians "come into being as textual entities only as part of the general counterlegitimation entailed by her defense of mourning" (148). The operation of Rowlandson's grief therefore makes her narrative a work of realism, in the sense that her text escapes the prevalent mode of representation in her culture (10). Yet Breitwieser's analysis does not account for the lack of such "realism" in other captivity narratives, an enormous number of which were written by grieving mothers whose infants died during captivity. What Breitwieser calls realism, I would instead call dialogism, for while there is certainly no absence of grief in other Puritan captivity narratives, there is an absence of cross-cultural dialogue. Breitwieser's description of Rowlandson's experience as above all a descent into personal grief, eclipses the fact of her functional adaptation—however partial—to Indian tribal life. By locating the source of her narrative's stylistic contradictions in Rowlandson's altered psychology as a result of an awakened human sympathy, the aftereffects of "survivor syndrome," or the sublimation of grief, each of the aforementioned readings considers the individual captive in opposition to her Puritan culture, rather than as a uniquely informed part of it.[2] These interpretations overlook the significance of Rowlandson's acculturation to Algonquian society, and they therefore ignore the effect the captive's culturally liminal position has on her recollective language. This is not to deny that her traumatic experience has psychological effects, but rather to insist that those effects reflect an effort to adjust to a new cultural milieu as much as they signify a response of grief at the loss of the old one. It may in fact be this acculturation as much as her mourning that Rowlandson feels she must repress.

As a captive, Mary Rowlandson occupies a hinge that divides one cultural subjectivity from another, for during her captivity she belongs wholly neither to the Puritan nor to the Indian cultural system. The redeemed captive's discourse is necessarily marked by this shift in her subject position. Mary Rowlandson probably wrote her narrative for devotional purposes, in order to reexperience the process of conversion she underwent during her captivity. Charles E. Hambrick-Stowe notes the close relation-

ship between conversion and conversation in Puritan culture, and while he calls Rowlandson's narrative "a devotional exercise in the tradition of the journal and the spiritual autobiography" (258), it is useful to apply his own link and to call her narrative a conversation, one which enabled her to remember her past affliction, and to discuss that experience with her present, restored self. By faithfully recording, at least indirectly, conversations between herself and the Indians, her narrative reveals—for readers less implicated in the isolated and ennobled Puritan worldview—the challenge which that dialogue ultimately posed to Puritanism. It is in this inscribed dialogue between two cultures that, I submit, the text's contradictions are most accurately located.

Just as Victor Turner's concept of "liminality" aptly defines this captive's between-cultural position,[3] I argue that Rowlandson's "participant" voice originates from what Turner calls a state of presence, whereas her "interpreter and commentator" voice is that of a culturally restored individual remembering past events—a state of tradition or distance. Turner believes that the interaction between two such states creates an arena in which meaning, drama, and a cultural self-awareness inevitably develop. This dynamic is similar to the one which M. M. Bakhtin claims to have been operative at the origin of the novel, when two or more hierarchically distanced cultures and languages come into contact with one another. The resultant heteroglossia is integral to the development of the novel form, which is characterized by a dialogic mixing of languages and genre. Both theories have value for an understanding of Mary Rowlandson's captivity narrative, a text which documents a cross-cultural interaction and mixes the several languages which engage in or result from that interaction, including the discourse of an orthodox Puritan woman and minister's wife, the discourse of that Puritan woman undergoing the process of acculturation, and conversations between that woman and individual Indians who speak an entirely different language. This narrative was one of the most fascinating and popular works of Puritan culture on both sides of the Atlantic, and its dialogism contributed to the formation and development of the Anglo-American novel.

Turner, who takes the term *limen* from the Belgian ethnographer Arnold Van Gennep, defines it as the second of three stages in rites of initiation—as the margin or threshold between the stages of separation from the culture or community, and reaggregation into it (*Dramas* 196). Rowlandson's journey separates her from English culture, the Puritan community, and the domestic family. The division of her narrative into "removes" enhances the sense that with each successive departure the captive becomes increasingly distant from her own culture and moves further and further into the wilderness where she has contact solely with the alien Algonquian culture.

That separation necessarily begins to change the captive's behavior, attitudes, and subjective sense of self. Over the nearly three-month period of her captivity, Mary Rowlandson undergoes a gradual process of acculturation. Resistant as she is at first to Indian food, she grows accustomed to it, and that which was once "their filthy trash" becomes "sweet and savoury to my taste" (131). Although she remains all but deaf to their humor, she does become increasingly sensitized to the intricacies of Indian expression. Early in her captivity Rowlandson relates a story, probably told by an Indian, of a fellow female captive and her child who were cooked on a fire and duly "served," as though it were the truth. Much later in her narrative, when the Indians tell her that they have roasted and eaten her son, she dismisses the tale after she "considered their horrible addictedness to lying, and that there is not one of them that makes the least conscience of speaking the truth" (141).

With her skill in sewing and knitting, Mary Rowlandson begins to assume a distinct role within the Indian community. Not only does her production of clothing, stockings, and hats increase her interaction with the Indians, but it gives her a defined position within their economy. She is paid for her work, and reintroduces that payment back into the tribe—either by trading for other goods, sharing her edible earnings, or simply offering her payment, "glad that I had anything that they would accept of" (136), to her master. Several times Mary Rowlandson refers to the Indian camp as "home" (136), and she often reveals her confused cultural identification in an inconsistent use of pronouns. During the seventh Remove, for example, she begins by associating herself with the Indians: "After a restless and hungry night there *we* had a wearisome time of it the next day." However, as the group arrives at "a place where English cattle had been," at "an English path" and "deserted English fields," it is the objectified Indians who take "what *they* could" from the forsaken land (although Rowlandson admits that "myself got two ears of Indian corn"). At the end of this scene she suddenly identifies herself instead with the English, claiming that the stolen corn would serve as "food for *our* merciless enemies [the Indians]," though she goes on to conclude that "that night *we* had a mess of wheat for *our* supper" (132–33, my emphases), including herself again amongst the Indians.

In two of the later removes Rowlandson betrays the extent of her immersion in Indian society. During the seventeenth Remove, after a day of travel, she remembers that "we came to an Indian Town, and the Indians sate down by a Wigwam discoursing, but I was almost spent, and could scarce speak" (148). Such a claim suggests that the captive would normally have "discoursed" with the Indians, though on this occasion she was too "spent" to participate. Similarly, during the nineteenth Remove, when the

captive is called to a counsel, she "sate down among them, as I was wont to do, as their manner is" (151), again suggesting a comfortable understanding of at least the basic tribal customs and language. Though the Indian language is transcribed only once (148), conversations between Rowlandson and the Indians are constantly referred to, either directly or indirectly. These conversations develop from the simple master-slave exchange of the first Remove, in which the captive is denied permission to sleep in an English house (121); to the mutually interested exchange of the seventh Remove, when an Indian is intrigued by Rowlandson's willingness to eat horse-liver (132); to her role as interpreter for another English captive during the thirteenth Remove (142).

Her immersion in Amerindian culture produces in Rowlandson a culturally liminal subjectivity that is very different from, though by no means alien to, her original Puritan subjectivity. I do not mean to suggest that she becomes entirely Indianized, for as acculturated as Mary Rowlandson becomes, and as much a regard as she grows to assume for her Indian master, she does not find a replacement for her domestic ties among the Indians. While many later Anglo-American captives ultimately joined Indian tribes, completing a ritual process of cultural integration,[4] Rowlandson remains in the liminal state—that "no-man's land betwixt and between the structural past and the structural future" (*Dramas* 41). Though she does, as Annette Kolodny has noted, "carve out an economic niche for herself" (18) by producing and trading within the Indian community, she remains well aware of her own status as a commodity within that economy. Rowlandson is even required to name her own worth—"They bid me speak what I thought he would give" (151)—in the ransom request sent to her husband.

Mary Rowlandson recorded her experience as a captive in a postliminal period after she had returned to her own culture. Her narration of past events reflects both that residual cultural liminality, as well as the Puritan discourse from which she was removed and to which she has returned. She viewed her captivity as a type of spiritual pilgrimage during which her sanctity and election were tested. Yet it was not only the individual Puritan Mary Rowlandson who was tested during this journey; her discourse was tested as well. By the time she writes her narrative, the challenge posed to her Puritan discourse by that of the Indian culture has passed, and her Puritan worldview—like her family—has been relatively restored. Yet that challenge to Puritan discourse, as remote and ineffective as it may seem to Mary Rowlandson once she is ransomed, and to the Puritans once they have won King Philip's War, is nevertheless recorded in the intercultural dialogue which is inscribed in her best-selling narrative. The memory of her experience, however faded, resists closure, and like an improperly sealed wound is reopened by the activity of remembrance and writing.

Victor Turner writes that "meaning arises when we try to put what culture and language have crystalized from the past together with what we feel, wish, and think about our present point in life. . . . Each such rubbing together of the hardwood and softwood of tradition and presence is potentially dramatic" ("Dewey" 33). In Mary Rowlandson's captivity narrative, such a "rubbing" is performed, with decidedly dramatic results. For Turner, drama refers here neither to a specifically literary genre, nor even to a textual form, but to a moment of crisis within a culture in which assumptions and paradigms are disrupted as a result of conflict with an alternate paradigm. Such a "social drama" resembles stage drama only in its structural development toward climax and resolution, although recurrent social dramas, he claims, can provide the material for ritual performative arts. Turner emphasizes that social stability within any particular culture is dependent on the dialectic initiated by such dramatic schisms, so that the original source of conflict ultimately becomes either reabsorbed or legitimated.

The significance of Rowlandson's narrative is that it combines several traditional narrative forms in order to accommodate her individually experienced paradigm crisis. Her use of such recognizable forms as the sermon, for example, with its seamless structures of closure, finally makes her narrative seem more a reassurance and recuperation of Puritan values than a crisis or schism within them. But even though the "social drama" in Rowlandson's experience is partially veiled by those forms, her narrative nevertheless puts into circulation an account of a conflict between two cultural paradigms. Bakhtin posits as the origin of the novel precisely such a scene of contact between two dramatically different cultures. Much like the temporal disparity that produces drama in Turner's model, Bakhtin's sets one culture that is tied to a traditional epic past against another immersed in a contemporaneous present. Even if one rejects the simplistic binarism of such an antinomy, Bakhtin nevertheless supplies in this theory of the novel a significant literary supplement to Turner's anthropological analysis, for out of the continual dialectic of social drama one sees the possibility of new literary forms emerging. Critics frequently claim that Rowlandson's narrative fulfilled a novelistic need in a society otherwise devoid of such amusements. Bakhtin's analysis and history of the novel allows us to take that claim more literally than it was intended, for Mary Rowlandson's captivity narrative exhibits linguistic and cultural characteristics which mark it as a type of proto-novel.

Bakhtin claims that the novel specifically emerges out of the interaction of an epic culture with a folk culture, whose ideologically different languages enter into a dialogue with one another. Bakhtin's definition of an

epic culture as "a socially isolated and culturally deaf semipatriarchal society" (11) would certainly describe that of the New England Puritans. Despite their original missionary impulses toward the Indians, extremely few Puritans had actual contact with them, and even fewer knew their language. By the 1670s not only had such efforts been largely abandoned, but the results of previous conversion efforts were considered worthy only of derision. Mary Rowlandson displays this prevailing belief in her own narrative when she dismisses the "Praying-Indians" (152) and remarks on "the savageness and brutishness of this barbarous Enemy, I [Ay] even those that seem to profess more than others among them" (122). The Puritan image of the Indian was predicated on what Bakhtin calls a "hierarchical (distancing and valorized) distance" (23), legitimated by Puritan theology and typology. Mary Rowlandson carried such conclusive and limited systems of belief about the Indians, about the Puritans, and about the world, with her into captivity.

The Indians, of course, remained an oral folk culture that existed almost entirely outside of the Puritan community, both ideologically and geographically. Characteristic of folk cultures, according to Bakhtin, is a "popular laughter" which, when directed at hierarchized subjects, destroys the distance which invests that subject with its epic sacredness. It is striking that what seems to most unnerve and upset Mary Rowlandson about the Indians—far more than the bundle of bloodied Puritan garments in one Indian's wigwam, for example—are their laughter and celebrations. During her first night of captivity she is denied permission to sleep in an abandoned house occasioning the amused Indian response "what will you love English men still?" and is forced instead to witness "the roaring, and singing and danceing, and yelling of those black creatures in the night" (121). When the captive falls off of a horse during their journey, she claims that "they like inhumane creatures laught, and rejoyced to see it" (123). It is while watching a crowd of Indians who "asked one another questions, and laughed, and rejoyced" (134) that she first breaks down and openly weeps before them. Later in her captivity, during a particularly clumsy river crossing "the Indians stood laughing to see me staggering along" resulting in "teares running down mine eyes" (147). The sudden appearance after this incident of a band of Indians "dressed in English Apparel," surely suggesting a lost Puritan battle, simply "damped my spirit" (148) in comparison. The response of laughter to a serious, sacred subject—in this case the spiritual trial of the Puritan pilgrim—"demolishes fear and piety before an object, before a world, making of it an object of familiar contact and thus clearing the ground for an absolutely free investigation of it" (Bakhtin 23). There exists the possibility in this text of the resultant parodic laughter which is,

however, never able to erupt because its author remains utterly insensitive to it. Mary Rowlandson, although she hears the laughter of the Indians, is incapable of sharing in it; she remains deaf, for example, to the subversive humor of the Indians' boasting that "they had done them [a defeated Puritan military company] a good turn, to send them to Heaven so soon" (160).

There is ultimately little destruction done to the "sealed-off and self-sufficient character" (Bakhtin 370) of the epic Puritan culture within the narrator's consciousness in the *Narrative.* The individual Indian act of kindness or sympathy does not significantly intrude onto Mary Rowlandson's belief—never recanted or modified—that the Indians are cruel, savage, barbarous heathen who act as instruments of Satan. A challenge to that belief, however, is inscribed linguistically in the dialogue which she unwittingly records, and that challenge ultimately begins to decenter the ideology of Puritanism. The Indians laugh, and the gap between their world and their captive's emerges as cultural rather than typologically symbolic. And since that culturally liminal captive is less Puritan than Puritan-becoming-Indian, her symbolic awareness of the Indians begins to be coupled with the detailed observations which were necessary to her survival, and which consequently altered her subjectivity, within this strange culture. Their ceremonies, still considered meaningless if not absurd, are nevertheless intimately described; their dress, their eating habits, their mourning practices, even the vanity of a high-born Indian squaw, are recorded so that "I may the better declare what happened to me." There is no real need, then, to document in detail the domestic restoration of her family at the end of her narrative; not because it is an event without importance, but because it is an event whose significance she already understands. Susan Howe has written that "[o]nly her retrospective narrative voice can control and connect the twists and turns of time past. Remembering a wild place there is no forgetting" (119). These are the memories of a liminal captive that become shared, through their publication, with the Puritan society. According to Victor Turner, such "major liminal situations are occasions on which society *takes cognizance of itself,* or rather where . . . members of that society may obtain an approximation, however limited, to a global view of man's place in the cosmos and his relations with other classes of visible and invisible entities" (*Dramas* 239–40). Puritan discourse, representative of that "unitary, canonic language, of a national myth bolstered by a yet-unshaken unity" begins to possess a means for imbalance, the possibility of becoming, in Bakhtin's terms,

> conscious of itself as only one among *other* cultures and languages. It is this knowledge that will sap the roots of a mythological feeling for language, based as it is on an absolute fusion of ideological

> meaning with language; there will arise an acute feeling for language boundaries (social, national and semantic), and only then will language reveal its essential *human* character; from behind its words, forms, styles, nationally characteristic and socially typical faces begin to emerge, the images of speaking human beings. (370)

The "authoritative" Puritan discourse—authorized at least in part by the sacredness of scripture—is represented alongside the "internally persuasive discourse" of Mary Rowlandson's own voice remembering and recounting her personal experience for herself.[5] From behind the ideologically and typologically formed Puritan image of the Indian begins to emerge the speaking human Indian.[6]

Debate is frequently waged over a suitable literary classification of the captivity narrative. While some critics claim it warrants its own genre, others subdivide it into smaller, already established genres or define it as a combination of several genres.[7] The latter definition most readily accommodates the captivity narrative which, according to Vaughan and Clark, combines elements of spiritual autobiography, the jeremiad, the sermon, and the adventure story. Other genres also implicit in the captivity narrative—and particularly in Mary Rowlandson's—are the travel-narrative, in which personal and spiritual growth become a function of geographic or spatial movement, and the domestic drama of shattered and reunited family ties. Yet such an "incorporation of various genres, both artistic . . . and extra-artistic" is most characteristic of the novel (Bakhtin 320), as is the process of trial and temptation which the hero/ine typically undergoes. The real figure of Mary Rowlandson, Puritan servant to an Indian master and mistress, almost prefigures the fictional role of the servant so important in later novels. Like the stereotypical servant, she is able to overhear the conversation of the Indians, to survey their social interaction and daily habits from an unthreatening vantage point. And like the uncomprehending fool of novelistic discourse, she reveals in her observations and her language far more than she realizes she knows. The long-held but erroneous assumption that Rowlandson died shortly after experiencing her captivity and writing her narrative, now appears almost to be an attempt to make Mary Rowlandson into the spiritual heroine of her own sentimental novel.[8]

Mary Rowlandson's captivity narrative was originally published with her first husband's last sermon, a jeremiad delivered on Fast Day to his Puritan congregation in Wethersfield, Connecticut. The irony of binding a sermon exhorting the community to fast together with a narrative in which the sermon-deliverer's wife struggles daily against literal starvation may not have occurred to its publisher. Yet the ultimate disappearance of Joseph Rowlandson's sermon from subsequent editions suggests in retrospect what

the Puritan community already felt: Mrs. Rowlandson's narrative achieved the effect which Puritan ministers—including Mr. Rowlandson—had long been striving to instill in their congregations. "The Possibility of God's Forsaking a People Who Have Been Near and Dear to Him"—the title of Reverend Rowlandson's final sermon—seemed a more tangible and narrowly escaped possibility in the wife's literal experience than in the husband's weekly jeremiad. Whether the readers of Rowlandson's captivity narrative derived more religious inspiration or secular fascination from it is difficult to judge. Derounian suggests that its popularity was probably a sign that it appealed to both traditionally religious and newer, more secular reading interests ("Publication" 255).

Yet it is also likely that the *Narrative* itself was one of the forces which helped to create those more secular reading interests,[9] if not the emergent literary forms that satisfied such interests. Rowlandson, it would seem, is able to contain and make sense of her experience only by combining elements of the various narrative forms available to her. And yet the narrative dialogism of her text exceeds the sum of that combination, just as parts of her experience among the Algonquians escape her effort to understand, to—in her words—"the better declare what happened to me during that grievous Captivity." However effectively her captivity narrative circulated an appeal for renewed piety, it also circulated an appealing story of cultural escape.

The extraordinary popularity of Mary Rowlandson's narrative, and the fact that no first edition survives simply because it was literally read into decay and oblivion, points to a link between her experience and a cultural fascination with it that is made concrete in the etymological link between captivity and captivation.[10] It is ironic that narratives about captivity may have been the first form of escape literature in America. Richard Slotkin has suggested that captivity by Indians was virtually the only acceptable way for a Puritan to experience the otherwise forbidden wilderness and the Indian culture which inhabited it (100). Edward M. Griffin has noted the possibility that for many female captives, release from the Indians frequently promised only a return to captivity in another form—as a domestic wife and mother in Puritan New England (47). Perhaps most appealing to its readers, however, was the freedom from traditional morality granted the captive by virtue of her or his need to survive within a hostile landscape and to adapt to a radically different culture. Narratives like Mary Rowlandson's which recalled such experiences inevitably revealed the boundaries, linguistic and otherwise, of the Puritan culture which produced them. It is not surprising that the emergent cultural and linguistic materials Rowlandson's narrative made available were repeated into a kind of mythology, transformed into fiction, and ultimately developed into the novel. The captiva-

tion of the reading public by the dialogic imagination revealed in Mary Rowlandson's prose, probably moved them to desire both a renewal of their sense of epic closedness and a freedom from the very confines of their own increasingly insufficient worldview. Such paradoxical desires would continue to be produced and satisfied by the captivity narrative which would begin, over the following century, to look more and more like a novel.

NOTES

1. Another explanation, besides the prevalent psychological one, is that Mary Rowlandson developed an emergent ethnographic sense and documented details of Algonquian culture out of an interest in its differences. While he does not directly address the split in Mary Rowlandson's narrative voice, Mason I. Lowance, Jr. does offer such an explanation for its inconsistency. Commenting on the intimacy with which Rowlandson describes her experience, Lowance claims that "the 'voice' through which she narrates seems to answer those many questions about primitive Indian culture that the reader is curious to ask: what were the rituals of eating? in what way did marriage function within the tribal community?" (77). It seems unlikely, however, that either Rowlandson or her readers were interested in the details of Indian tribal custom or society. Even when the Puritans were not at war with the Indians, the latter represented in the worldview of the former not a viable and self-sufficient culture, but a symbolic force—that of the tempting devil. It is quite possible that narratives such as Rowlandson's may have created, over time, such an interest among their readers. Her own reasons for including seemingly ethnographic details, however, are not likely to have been a desire to satisfy the cultural curiosity of her readers. And her own "social and cultural perspective" is developed only in the sense that she learns to function within Amerindian society and culture, not in the sense that she reaches a new understanding and appreciation of it.

2. In fact, it is a mark of that consistency that until Richard Slotkin's reading of this narrative no critics, to my knowledge, recognized the contradictions that now seem so apparent in Rowlandson's text. Before Slotkin, readers from Increase Mather onward inevitably stressed the narrative's standard use of Puritan typology and theology.

3. Vaughan and Clark, in their introduction, suggest the usefulness Turner's concept of liminality has for the experience of the Indian captive, but their discussion is limited and does not consider Rowlandson's narrative in its specificity.

4. See, for example, VanDerBeets and Axtell.

5. The terms "authoritative discourse" and "internally persuasive discourse" are Bakhtin's (342–48).

6. It is on the basis of the significance of this conflict between discourses that I disagree with Mitchell Breitwieser's argument that "only with the incapacitation of typology by grief does a human Indian figure come into view at the margin of perception" (132). Once again, were grief the sole determinant for such an emergence, human Indian figures would appear in far more Puritan captivity narratives.

7. See especially VanDerBeets, Pearce, and Vaughan and Clark.

8. For essential biographical information on Mary Rowlandson, including her second marriage, see Greene, who documents the fact that she lived until 1710, twenty-eight years after the publication of her narrative and thirty-four years after the captivity experience itself.

9. As later editions of her own book suggest, public interest turned from *The Sovereignty & Goodness of God, Together, With the Faithfulness of His Promises Displayed*...—the original title of her work—to the more secular subjects of later titles such as *The True History of the Captivity and Restoration* ... or *The Narrative of the Captivity, Suffering and Removes of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson.* In a later social and historical context, her captivity narrative had to compete with a multitude of others, many of which were fictionalized or semi-fictionalized accounts. The promotion of her text clearly began to emphasize the veracity of her story at the same time that it transformed her spiritual sufferings into (or neglected them in favor of) physical ones.

10. Griffin begins to suggest a connection between these two terms. I am more specifically interested in captivation as fascination, however—including the fascination of reading and the fantasy of escape—than in Griffin's captivation as an individual will subordinate to another individual or system.

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